

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BANGKO 18798 241357Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5473

S E C R E T BANGKOK 18798

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EXDIS

FOR OAKLEY

EO 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT, TH, US
SUBJ: THANIN GOVERNMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. SEPTELS TODAY REPORT THE MOST RECENT RTG ACTIONS AGAINST BOTH LABOR AND STUDENTS ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH OCTOBER 6 INCIDENT. IN BOTH AREAS RTG SEEMS TO BE EMBARKING ON ACTIONS THAT ARE SHORT SIGHTED IN DOMESTIC TERMS AND WHICH WILL CERTAINLY IMPACT ADVERSELY ON RTG IMAGE ABROAD.

2. AT SAME TIME THANIN GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO BE INCREASINGLY EMBATTLED AND ISLOATED FROM ELEMENTS IN THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP INCLUDING KRIANGSAK AS WELL AS OTHER KEY ELEMENTS IN SOCIETY. AT THIS POINT THERE ARE ONCE AGAIN EMERGING INCREASINGLY OPEN CRITICISMS AND RUMORS ABOUT GOVERNMENTAL CHANGE. OUR BEST ESTIMATE NOW IS THAT THE KEY FACTOR IN ANY SUCH CHANGE, THE THAI MILITARY HEIRARCHY, REMAIN PREOCCUPIED WITH THE UPCOMING OCTOBER 1 MILITARY CHANGES AND WOULD NOT WANT TO ADD A CRISIS OVER THE THANIN GOVERNMENT TO THAT BURDEN. HOWEVER, INEVITABLE NEGATIVE EXTERNAL REACTION TO RTG'S HANDLING OF TRIAL OF 18 STUDENTS AS WELL AS CRITICISM OF ITS HANDLING OF LABOR

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SITUATION MAY EXACERBATE EXISTING STRAINS AND FRICTIONS BESETTING THAI BODY POLITIC.

3. IN OUR APPROACHES ON THESE POLITICALLY SENSITIVE MATTERS WE SHOULD BEAR THIS IN MIND SINCE OUR PUBLIC STANCE AND PRIVATE EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN COULD BE USED, OR MISUSED, IN THE PLAY OF DOMESTIC THAI POLITICS. THIS IN INEVITABLE GIVEN PRESENT SITUATION

AND I DO NOT RECOMMEND INACTION BECAUSE OF THAT. I BELIEVE THAT
WE MUST BE CERTAIN RTG UNDERSTANDS OUR CONCERNS BOTH IN TERMS
OF OUR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AS WELL AS THE NEGATIVE IMPACT
ITS ACTIONS WILL HAVE IN TERMS OF THAILAND'S OWN INTERESTS.
HOWEVER, I WANT YOU TO BE AWARE OF THIS FACTOR GIVEN OUR CLEAR
INTENTION TO HAVE NO PART IN THAI DOMESTIC POLITICS OR KING
MAKING.
O'DONOHUE

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Message Attributes

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